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BIOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE ST. MARY'S RIVER
BY THE ONTARIO WATER RESOURCES COMMISSION IN
CO-OPERATION WITH THE IJC 1968

BIOLOGICAL SURVEY

of the

ST. MARY'S RIVER

by the

ONTARIO WATER RESOURCES COMMISSION

in co-operation

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INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION

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BIOLOGICAL SURVEY

of the

ST. MARY'S RIVER

A biological survey undertaken
in 1967 by the Ontario Water Resources
Commission in co-operation with the
International Joint Commission.

by
D. M. Veal,
Biology Branch,
Ontario Water
Resources Commission
September, 1968

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
METHODS.....	2
RELATIONSHIPS OF BOTTOM FAUNA TO WATER QUALITY AND SEDIMENT CHARACTERISTICS.....	3
RESULTS.....	4
Section A	5
Section B	6
Section C	9
Section D	12
Section E	15
Section F	18
DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY.....	18
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	23
APPENDIX I	24
APPENDIX II	48

INTRODUCTION

The St. Mary's River is the connecting waterway between Lake Superior and Lake Huron. The river is divided into several channels by three main islands, namely Sugar Island, Neebish Island and St. Joseph Island (Fig. 1). These channels in several places broaden out to form lakes and bays. Lake George, for example, is approximately eight miles long and two and one-half to four miles wide. The river bottom varies from being rocky in areas of rapid flow to clay and silt in the slow-flowing sections.

The volume of flow averages about 73,000 cfs and fluctuates little because flow is controlled by the Compensating Works Dam located at Sault Ste. Marie. The rate of flow along most of the river is slow enough for navigation, except at the St. Mary's Falls (Sault Ste. Marie) where ship locks permit commercial and pleasure boats to pass through.

There are only two urban centres on the St. Mary's River - Sault Ste. Marie (Ontario) and Sault Ste. Marie (Michigan), both located at the St. Mary's Falls. More than half the working force of Sault Ste. Marie (Ontario) is employed by the Algoma Steel Corporation in that city. Many others are employed by other industries, such as the Abitibi Power and Paper Company and the Mannesman Tube Company. The city is, therefore, primarily an industrial centre.

The St. Mary's River, because of its location on the Great Lakes system, serves an important role in commercial

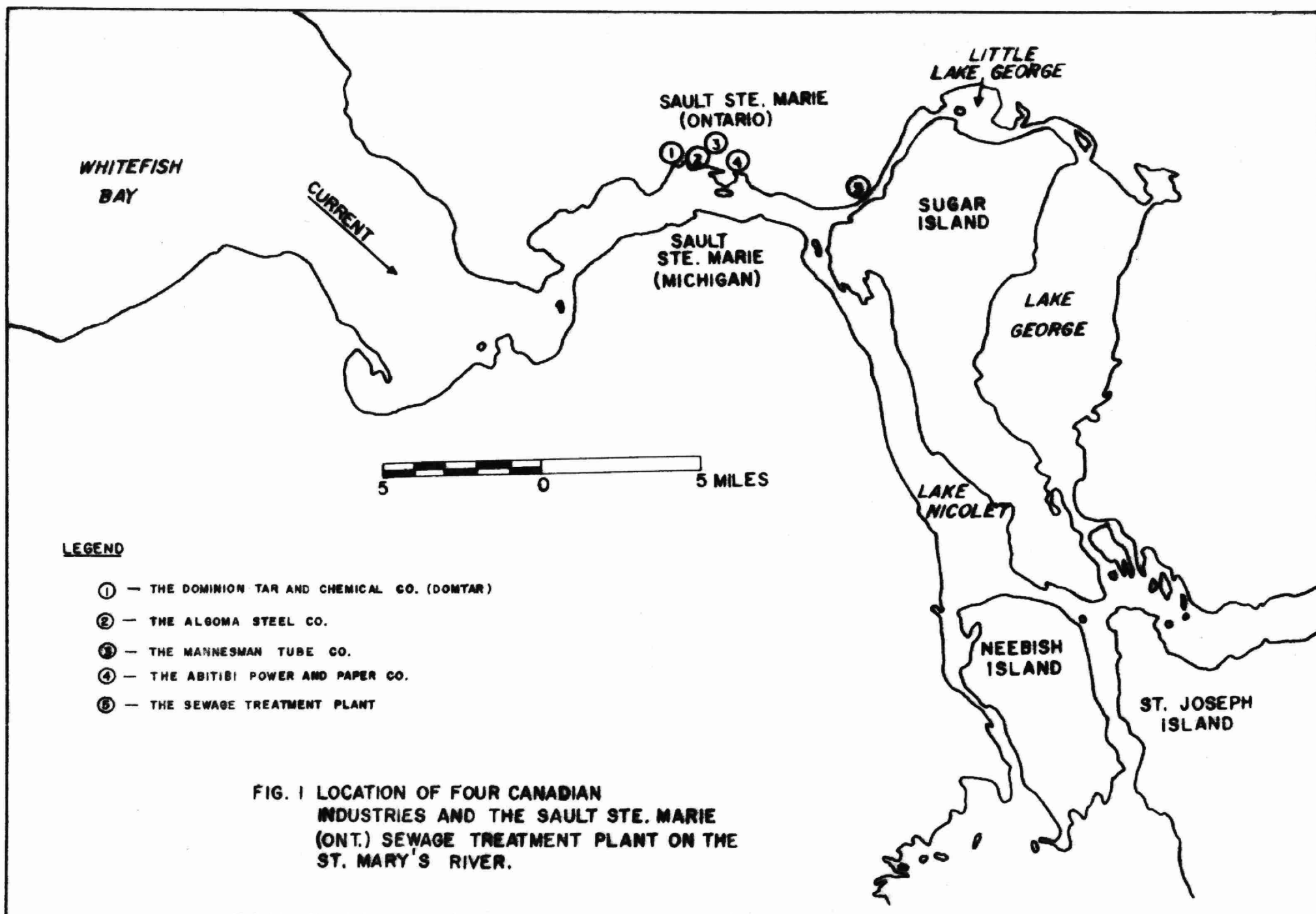
navigation. In addition, it is used as an industrial and public water supply, for hydro power generation, waste assimilation, and for recreation, boating, waterfowl hunting and fishing. It is important that water quality be kept to a high standard because of the river's multiple use potential.

On the American side, there are no significant industrial waste discharges to the river. On the Canadian side, however, four industries discharge either directly or indirectly into the St. Mary's River - the Algoma Steel Corporation, the Abitibi Power and Paper Company, the Mannesman Tube Company and the Dominion Tar and Chemical Company (Domtar) (Fig. 1). Downstream from Sault Ste. Marie (Ontario) the effluent from the city's sewage treatment plant enters the river.

The following survey was conducted in July and August, 1967, in order to establish the quality of water and sediment in the river and to determine to what extent the waste discharges are causing impairment. All but the lower reaches of the river were studied (Fig. 2).

METHODS

Primary attention was devoted to the benthic populations of the St. Mary's River. A total of 89 stations were sampled using a Ponar dredge. Two dredge samples were collected at each of 80 stations, and one sample was collected at each of the remaining nine stations. The invertebrates were separated from the sediment using a 24-mesh screen (0.65 mm aperture), were subsequently preserved in 95% ethanol and returned to the laboratory for enumeration and identification.



At each station, physical characteristics of the sediment were described and selected sediment samples were retained for further physical examination and/or chemical analyses. In order to determine relationships between water quality and the character of the sediments, chemical tests were conducted on the water at these stations, following shipment to the OWRC laboratory at Toronto.

RELATIONSHIPS OF BOTTOM FAUNA TO WATER QUALITY AND SEDIMENT CHARACTERISTICS

Investigations of benthic fauna are useful in measuring water quality. One of the most significant features of the macroinvertebrate population is that it is very stable in both quality and quantity relative to the chemical and bacteriological characteristics of water. Macroinvertebrates respond gradually to changes in water quality characteristics except in extreme cases where a toxic material suddenly kills certain species or the whole population. A biological survey, therefore, not only gives an indication of water quality at the time of the investigation, but it gives a long-term indication of what the quality of water has been prior to the investigation.

Another important aspect of investigating the benthos is that the population structure may be changed when the sediment becomes altered by a foreign material, such as the settling of iron oxide particles. In such cases analyses of water samples may show no impairment, while fish production may be reduced by disruption of the normal biological food chain.

In general, the response of benthic communities to the characteristics of the water and sediment is not unlike the response of any biological population to its environment. Some species are killed by pollutants, others thrive and become abundant in organically-enriched environments. Most species of mayfly nymphs and caddisfly larvae, for example, cannot live in an organically-polluted environment, while many species of tubificid worms are tolerant to heavy organic enrichment and become very abundant with the lack of competition and with excess food. A clean-water community is usually characterized by a wide variety of species, with no one species dominating. In a polluted environment, only a few species are found, all of which are pollution-tolerant, and tubificid worms often reach very high population densities.

The bottom fauna varies according to natural characteristics of a body of water, such as depth, temperature, and type of sediment. For this reason, experience is necessary to determine whether abnormal communities are caused by natural or man-made influences.

RESULTS

Appendix I lists the macroinvertebrates found at each station, and Appendix II lists the results of chemical tests conducted at selected stations.

For purposes of illustration and comparison, the study area was divided into six sections - A, B, C, D, E and F (Fig. 2).

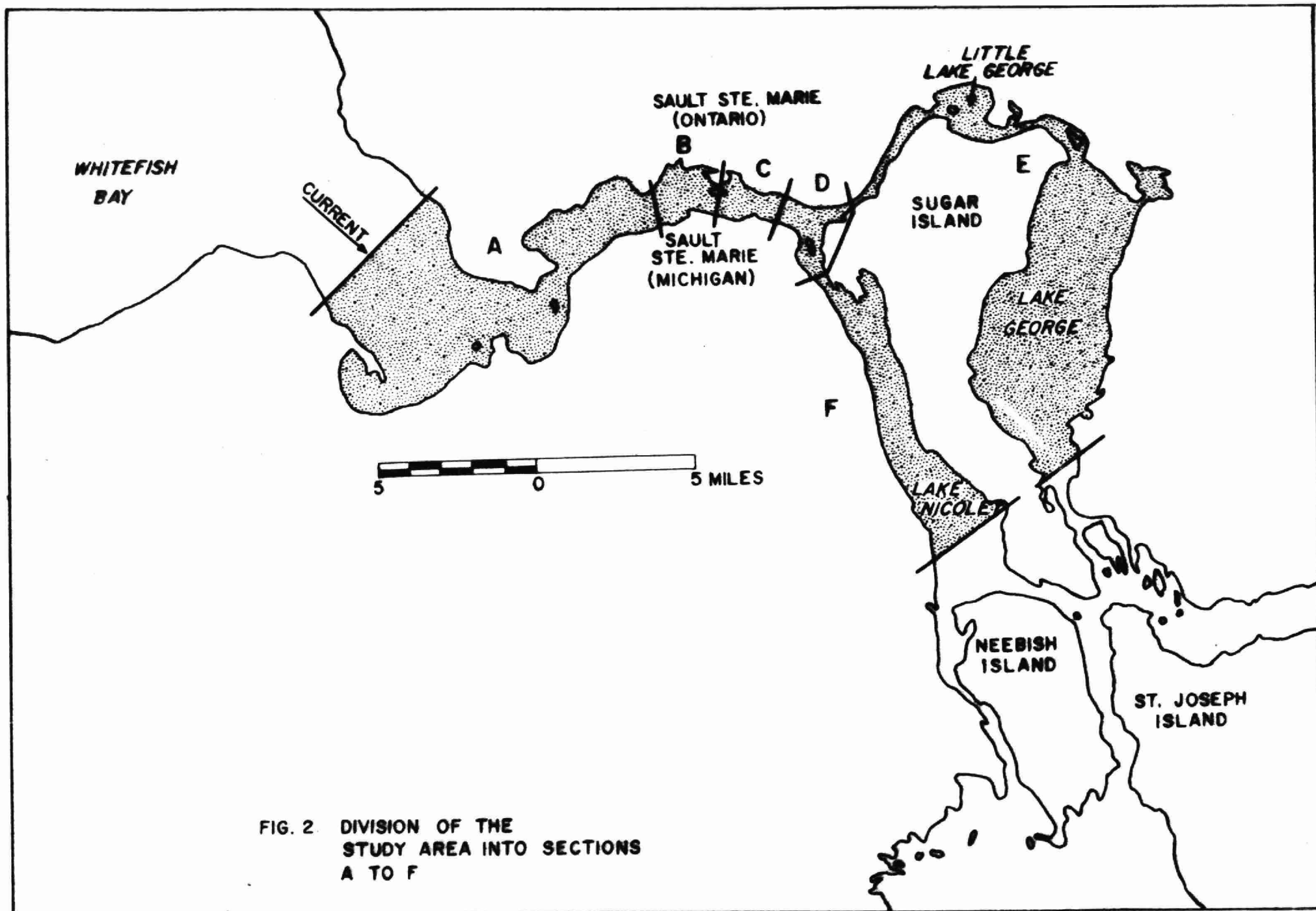


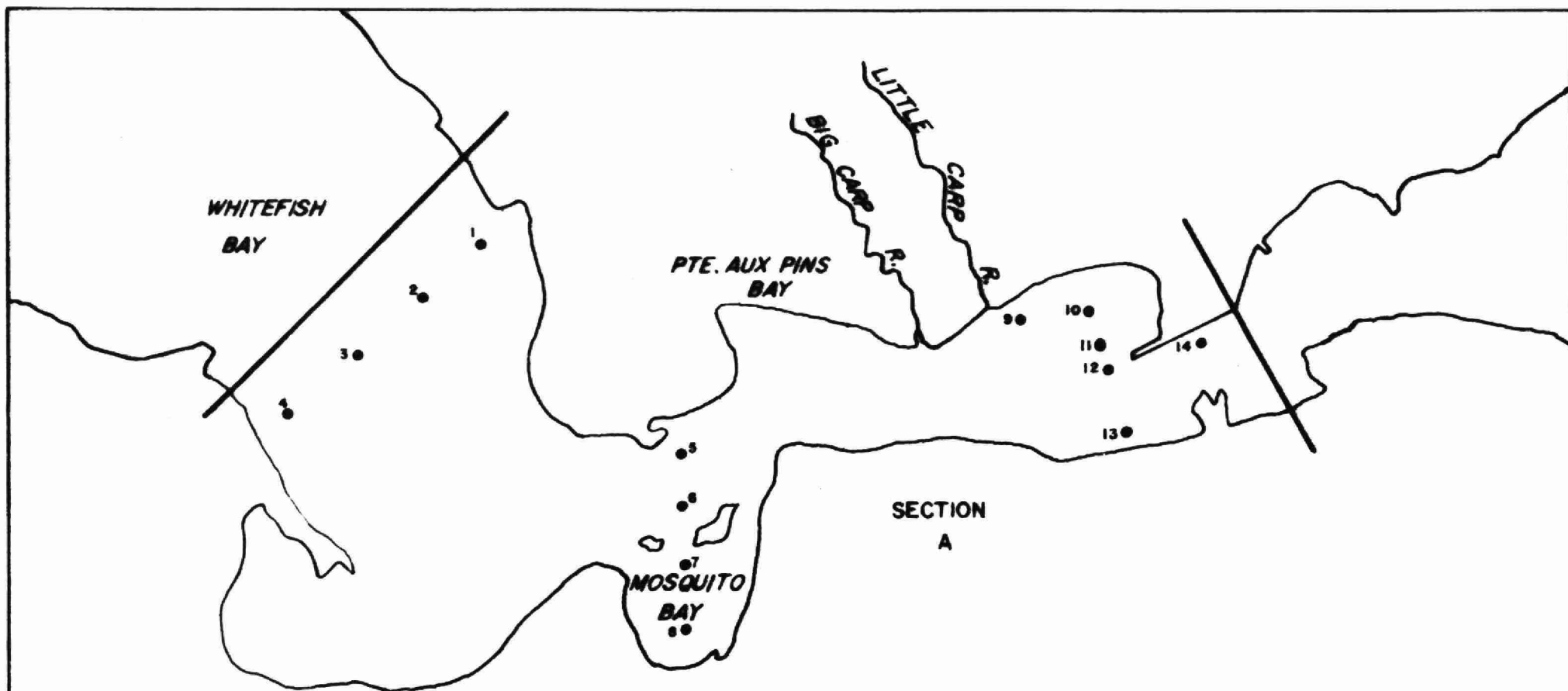
FIG. 2 DIVISION OF THE STUDY AREA INTO SECTIONS A TO F

Section A

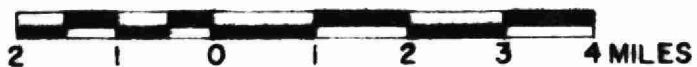
Figure 3 shows the locations of the fourteen stations sampled in Section A. Data collected from these stations indicated that the water quality in this area was good. No impairment was detected from any of the biological or chemical measurements.

The benthic communities were characterized by a wide variety of species and the common occurrence of organisms which can live only in clean water. Mayflies and caddisflies, which are sensitive to pollution, were found at seven stations and eight stations respectively. Three genera of mayflies (Hexagenia, Ephemera, Caenis) were found, along with four genera of caddisflies (Oecetis, Mystacides, Polycentropus, Phryganea). Amphipods, another relatively intolerant group of organisms, were recovered at 11 stations; Pontoporeia affinis and Hyaella azteca each occurred at six stations. Tubificid worms, which often become abundant in polluted environments, were found only in low densities, ranging from 0 to 729 per M². A relatively wide variety of species were recovered, including Potamothenix vejovskyi, Aulodrilus americanus, A. piqueti, and Psammoryctides curvisetosus, none of which are normally found in impaired water. Similarly midge larvae, which also tend to become abundant in organically-enriched areas, were characterized by low densities and wide variety of species.

In addition, chemical parameters indicated good water quality (Appendix II). Total phosphate (as PO₄), total kjeldahl, solids and phenols were all relatively low. Also,



**FIG.3 LOCATION OF THE 14 STATIONS
SAMPLED IN SECTION A**



no oil slick, sediment odour, wood particles or iron oxide particles were found in the sediment, nor was any other visual impairment noted.

Section B

Figure 4a shows the locations of sampling stations in section B, as well as the locations of industrial waste outfalls. The Algoma Steel plant discharges cooling water and waste materials at several locations. At locations 1 and 3 (Fig. 4a), effluents enter Davignon Creek after passing through oil separators. Effluents 5 to 9, located at the head of the loading dock, carry mainly cooling water, but some waste materials are contained in these discharges as well (e.g. phenols, solids). Effluent 10 carries a high concentration of solids, most of which is iron oxide. Discharges 11 and 12 carry cooling water, but again some waste materials are discharged. The effluent at 12 is passed through an oil separator before being released into the river.

The Mannesman Tube Company discharges to Davignon Creek at location 2, and the Dominion Tar and Chemical Company discharges to Bennet Creek at location 4.

The bottom fauna in this section of the study area was found to be disrupted at several stations owing mainly to three waste materials in the sediment - iron particles, wood particles and oil. Figures 4b, 4c, 4d and 4e illustrate the areas where wood particles, high iron oxide concentrations and oil were found in the sediment.

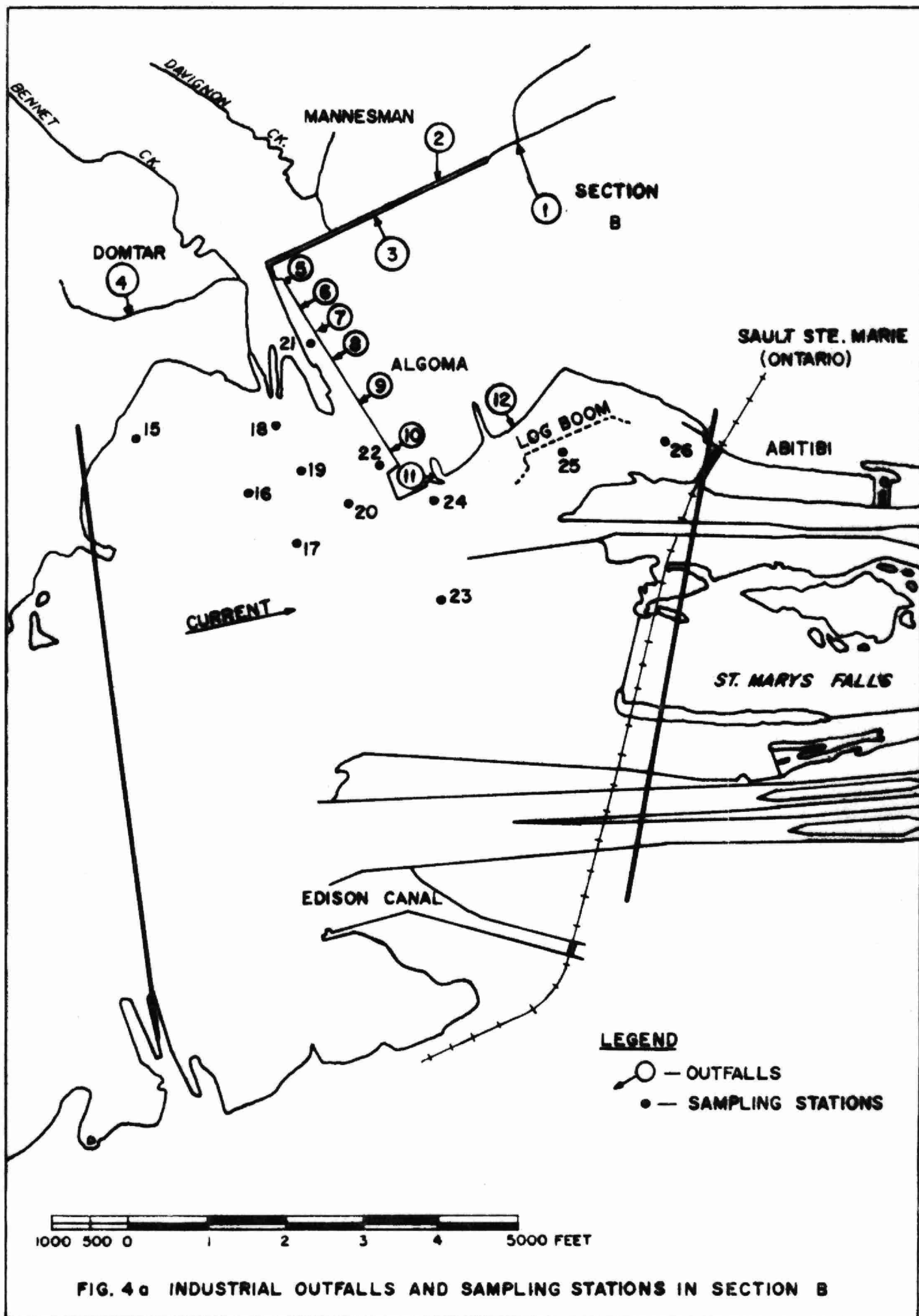
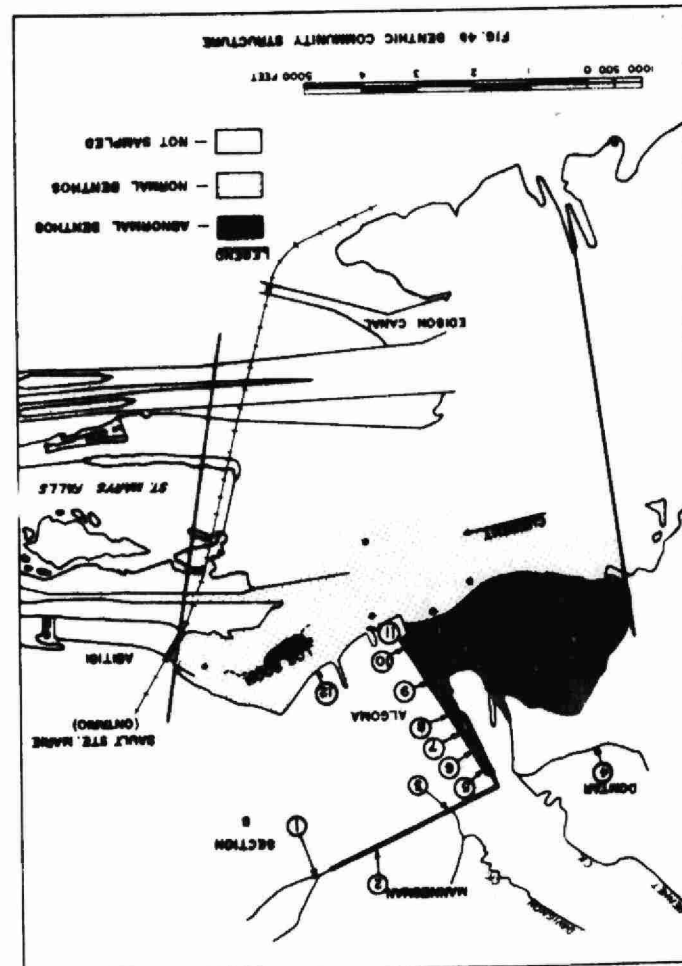
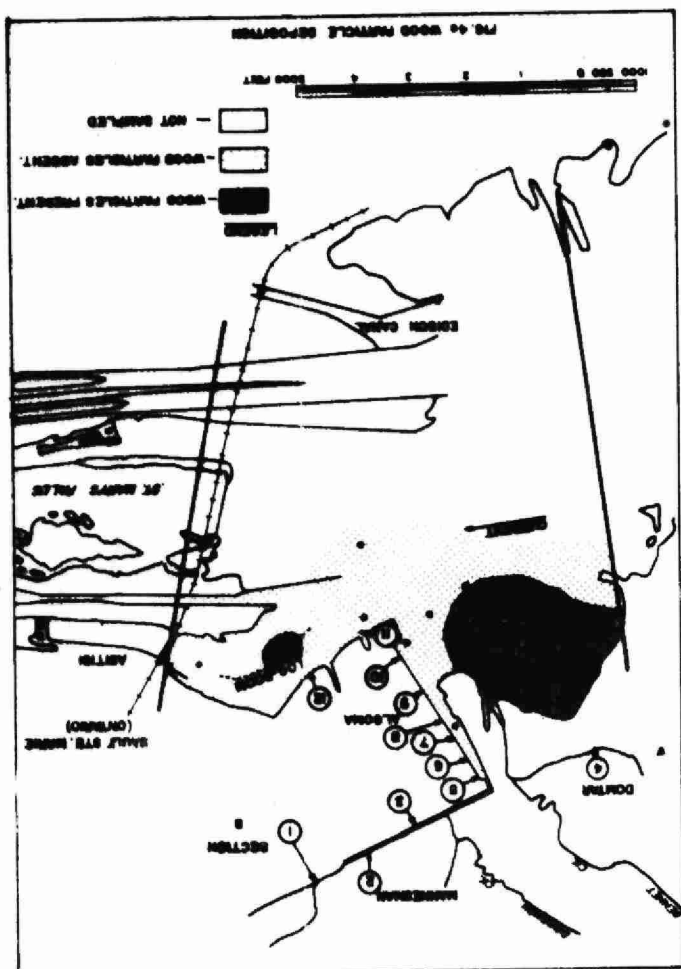
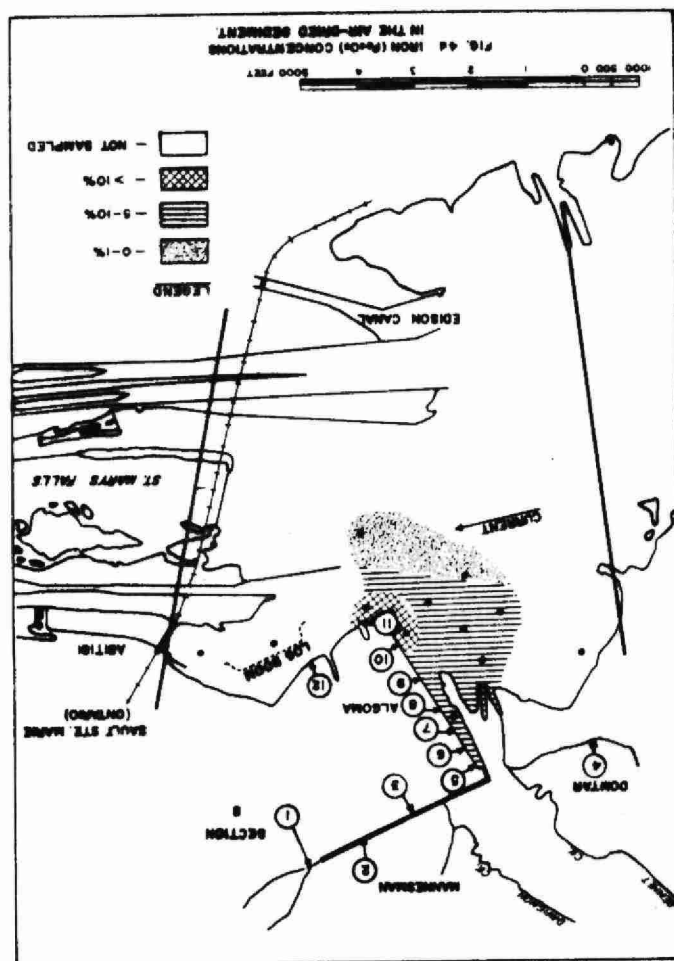
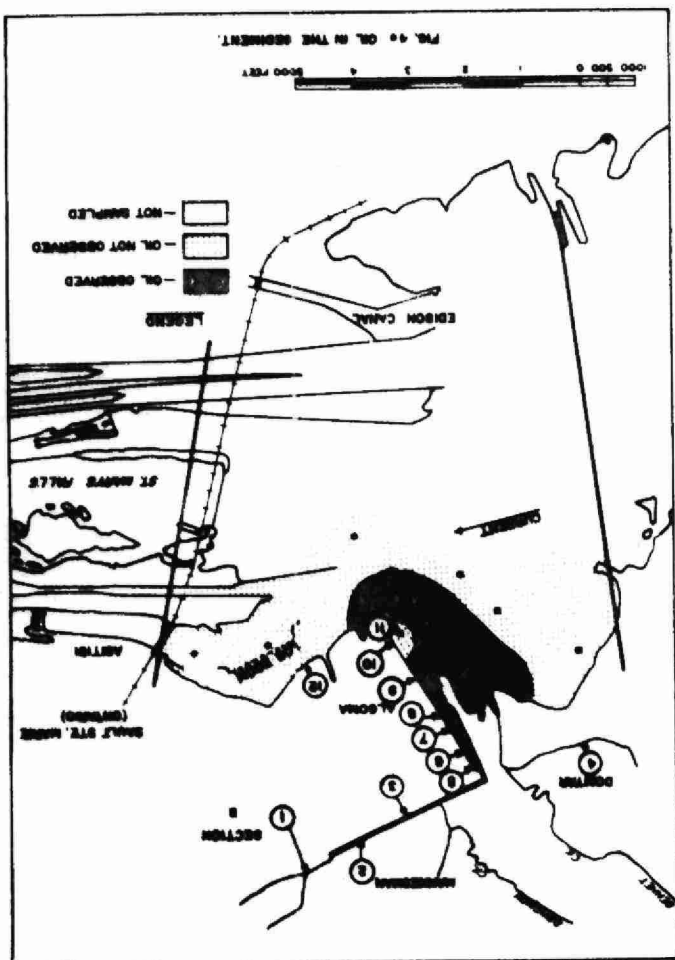


FIG. 4a INDUSTRIAL OUTFALLS AND SAMPLING STATIONS IN SECTION B



Station 21, located near the middle of Algoma's loading dock (Fig. 4a), contained only tubificid worms, all of which were pollution tolerant - Tubifex tubifex, Limnodrilus hoffmeisteri, and L. cervix. An oil slick was noted on the water's surface at this station, and oil was found in the sediment. There was also a considerable amount of iron oxide in the sediment (6.5%)*, and this iron oxide-oil combination was presumably the major factor in affecting the benthic community.

Station 22 was located near outfall number 10 which carries a high iron concentration. Severe impairment was evident at this station, as no macroinvertebrates were found. The sediment was a reddish-brown colour, and lab tests showed that iron constituted 25% of the sediment weight. Iron oxide particles in the sediment were the main factor in eliminating the macrobenthos in this area.

The normal benthos in the bay (stations 15, 16, 18 and 19) is disrupted primarily by iron oxide, oil and wood particles in the sediment. At station 15, the sediment was blanketed with wood particles, and only pollution-tolerant organisms were found (midges, clams, worms and leeches). Station 18 contained only tubificid worms, all of which were pollution-tolerant (L. hoffmeisteri, T. tubifex and Pelosclex ferox). Oil was noted in the sediment at this station (lab tests showed 1.16% ether-soluble oils), wood particles were observed, and sediment analyses revealed a substantial iron content - 7%. The combination of these three wastes was no doubt largely responsible for the unbalanced benthic community.

* All sediment iron determinations refer to Fe_2O_3 weight of the air-dried sediment.

Similarly, oil, iron (6%) and wood particles were noted at station 19. Only pollution-tolerant worms and midges were found, as well as a snail (Campeloma) and clam (Pisidium). The sediment at 16 had similar characteristics, and only tubificid worms and midge larvae were found. However, some recovery was indicated, as the tubificids Aulodrilus pluriseta and P. vej dovskyi, which are normally found only in fairly clean water, were found at this station.

Stations 20 and 24 had more balanced communities, including the pollution-sensitive mayfly Hexagenia. However, benthic production was still somewhat impaired. Oil was noticed in the sediment at each of these stations, and iron content was quite high (5% at station 20 and 11% at station 24). The lack of wood particles at these stations probably accounted for the partial recovery that was noted.

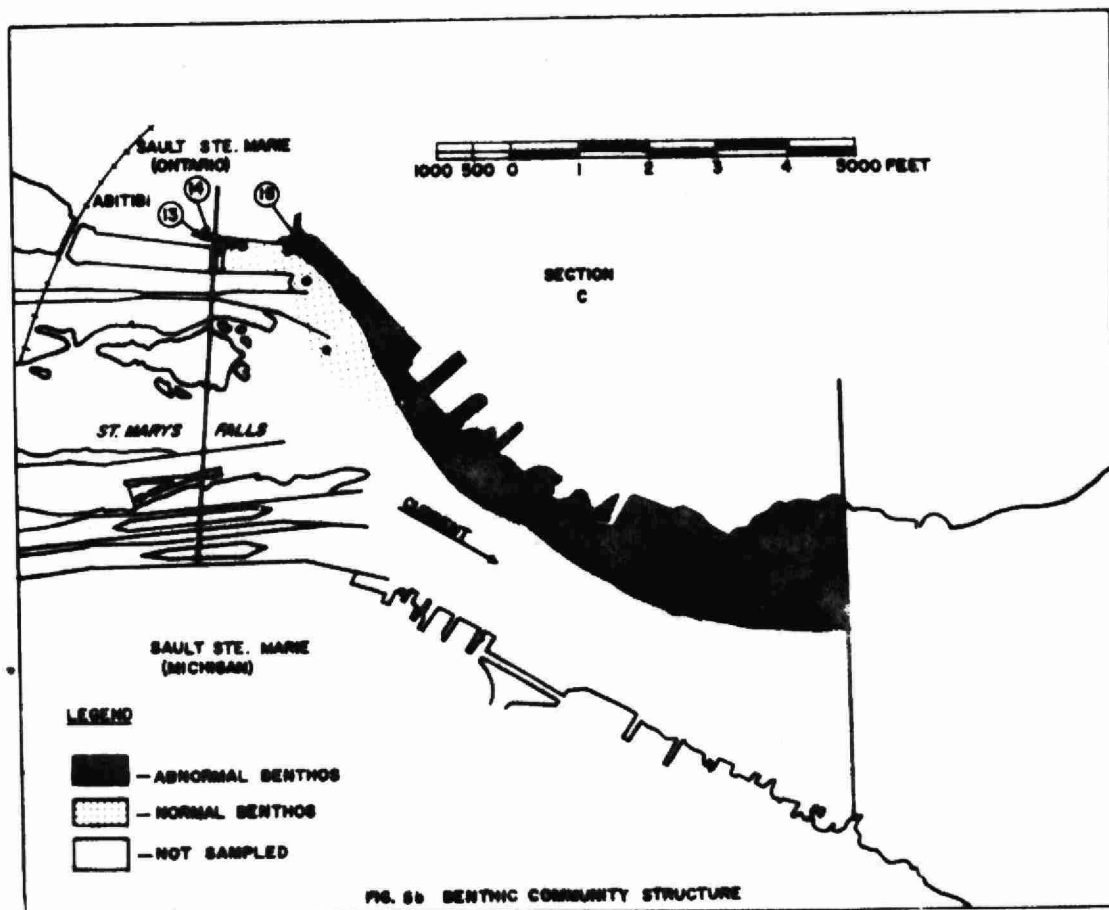
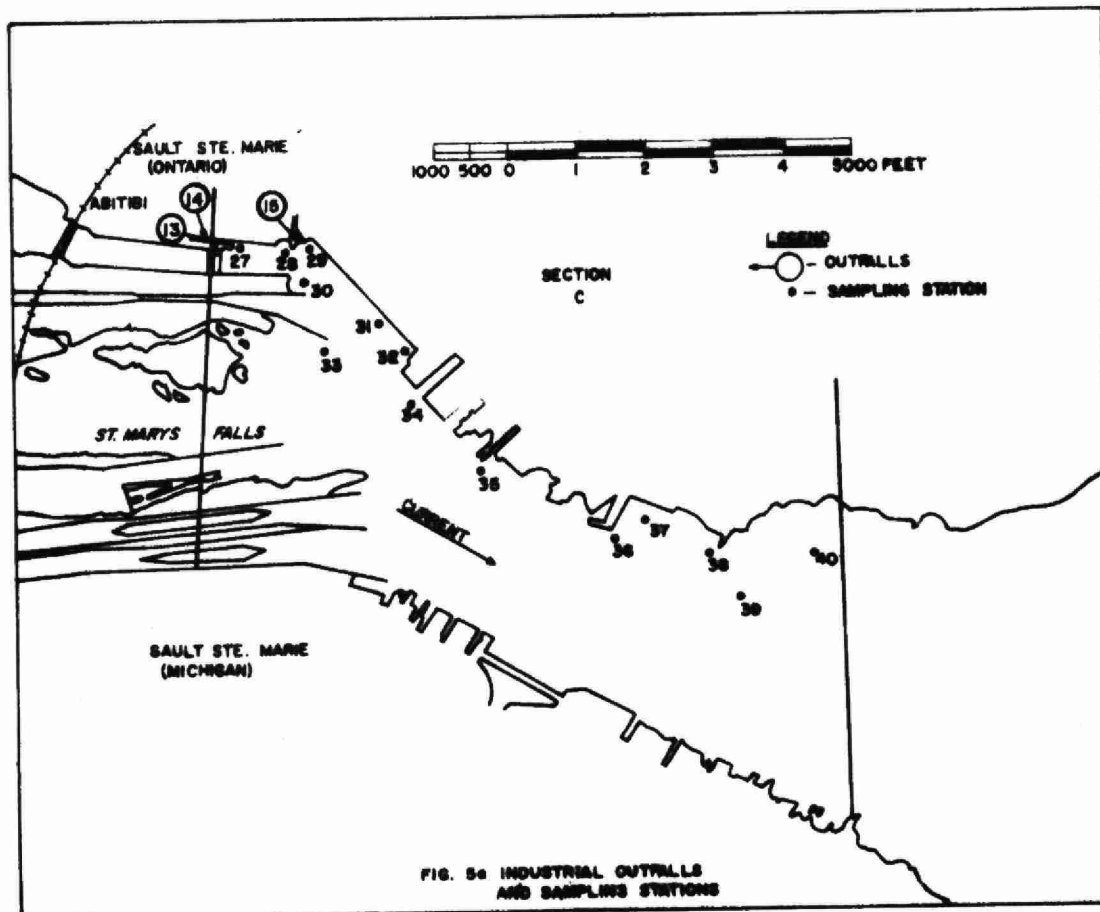
The benthic fauna at stations 17, 23, 25 and 26 indicated little or no impairment. The mayfly genus Hexagenia was found at station 17, the mayfly genera Hexagenia and Ephemera were present at station 23, and the caddisfly genera Hydropsyche, Rhyacophila, and Dolophilus at station 26. Station 25 was located near a log boom, and wood particles in the sediment somewhat disrupted normal bottom faunal development. However, the lumbriculid worm Stylodrilus heringianus was found, which is quite pollution-intolerant. At all of these stations iron content in the sediment was low (0.9% - 1.7%), no oil was noticed in the sediment, and wood particles were noted only at station 25.

The high iron content in the sediment at stations 16, 18 and 19 indicated that iron oxide particles from effluent #10 had been carried in a westerly direction, to settle out in the bay. This was verified when a small drogue placed in the effluent on a calm day (August 1) was carried into the bay. The coarse iron oxide particles appeared to settle out a short distance from the effluent while the finer particles were predominant further offshore. It is obvious that some iron is carried into the main part of the river, as stations 20 and 24 both had a considerable amount of iron in the sediment.

In order to investigate the thermal effects of cooling water being discharged along the loading dock, temperature readings were taken on surface and bottom water at several locations on August 1. Bottom water along the loading dock was from 3 to 8°C cooler than surface water. This warm surface water probably affects localized phytoplankton production but the effect on the rest of the biota is undoubtedly quite minor.

Section C

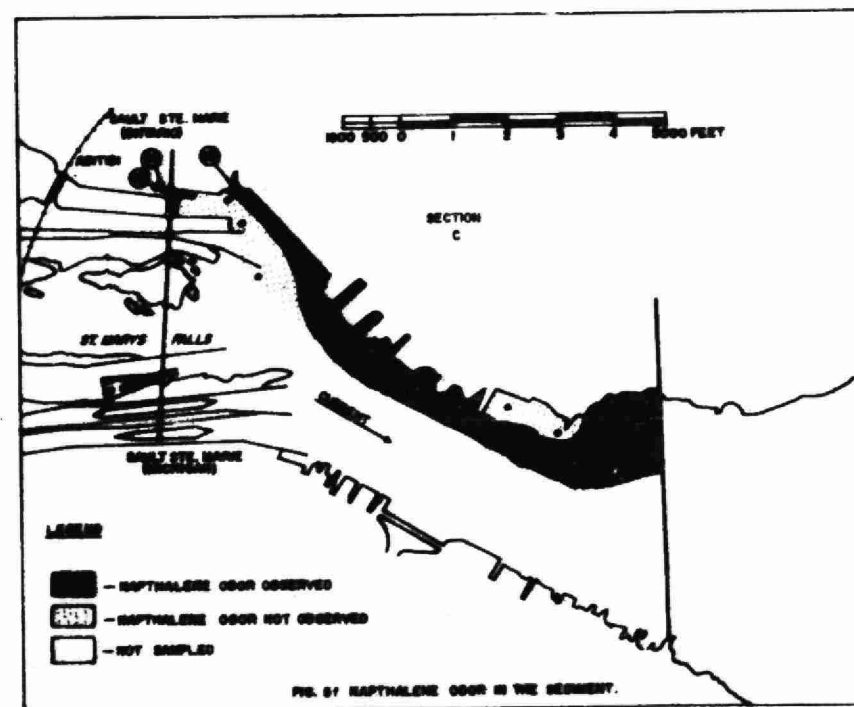
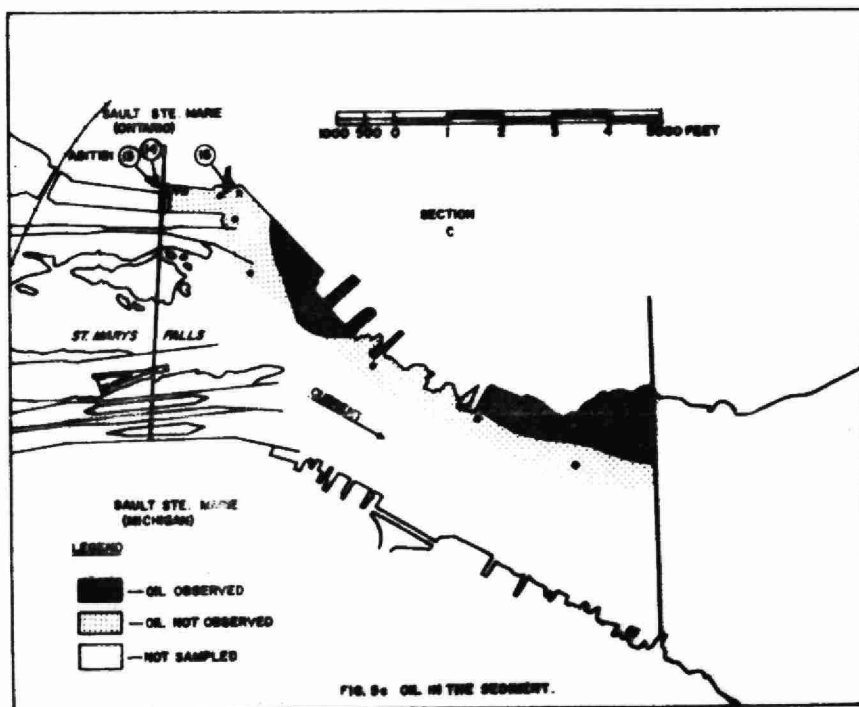
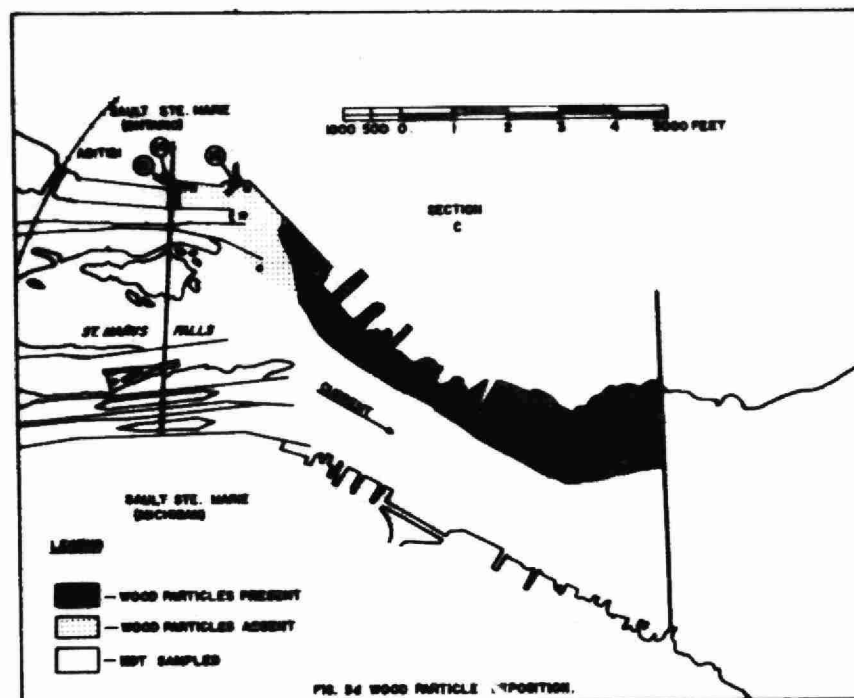
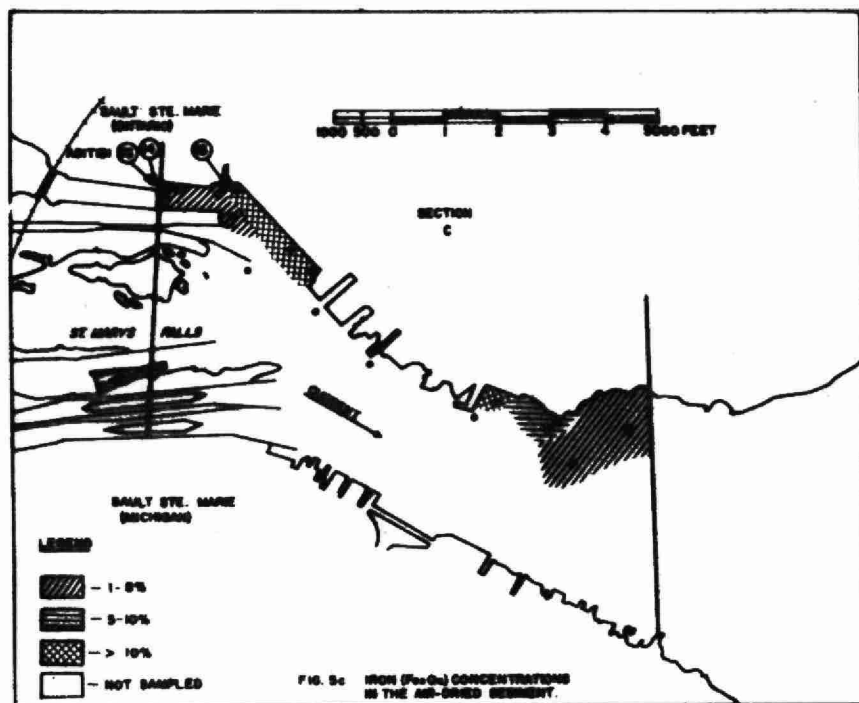
This area receives three industrial discharges, shown in Figure 5a. Effluents 13 and 14 carry wastes from the Abitibi Power and Paper Company which contain considerable quantities of wood particles and fibre, and are high in BOD₅, suspended solids, phenol and sulphite. Effluent 15, often referred to as the trunk sewer, carries wastes from the Algoma Steel Corporation. This trunk sewer carries a volume of about 75 mgd, including a variety of pollutants. Some of the major



waste materials are degradable materials with a high BOD₅, suspended solids, oils, phenol, cyanide, ammonia, and iron.

A total of 14 stations were sampled in this section (Fig. 5a). Benthic communities indicative of a polluted environment were evident at all but five of these stations; these five (27, 28, 30, 33, 39) are presumably outside the influence of wastes from the trunk sewer. Impairment in this section is caused primarily by four waste materials associated with the sediment: 1) iron oxide particles 2) wood particles 3) oil and 4) naphthalene. The area of biological degradation and the distribution of these wastes is illustrated in Figures 5b, 5c, 5d, 5e, and 5f.

The area between the Abitibi Power and Paper Plant and the trunk sewer was very difficult to sample because of the rapid water flow. However, some information was gained from samples collected at stations 27 and 28. Station 27, located above the trunk sewer (15) and outside the influence of the Abitibi Power and Paper Company's outfalls, had an abnormal benthos, attributable to the coarse gravel bottom which is subjected to continuous washing and shifting by the current. However, the lumbriculid worm Stylodrilus heringianus, plus a good variety of midge larvae were found, indicating little or no impairment from waste materials. Station 28, located above the trunk sewer but within the influence of Abitibi's outfalls, again had an unfavourable physical environment (coarse, clean gravel). The isopod Asellus, however, which is not found in heavily polluted water, was recovered at this station. The degree of impairment at this distance down-



stream from Abitibi's wastes was not well determined, but it is believed that impairment is minor. The major impairment from these wastes occurs further downstream where the wood particles and fibre settle out.

Stations 30 and 33, located outside the influence of the industrial wastes, contained the clean-water mayfly genus Hexagenia, as well as a good variety of midges and worms. Good water quality was therefore indicated. None of the chemical measurement indicated water quality impairment.

Wastes from the trunk sewer hug the Canadian side of the river because of the rapid river flow. Stations 29, 31, 32, 34 and 35 were all downstream and within the influence of wastes from the sewer. The benthos was severely disrupted at all of these stations, with pollution-tolerant sludgeworms being the only organisms found. Iron in the sediment, as well as wood particles, fibre, oil and naphthalene probably all play a part in causing this extensive impairment of the benthic community. Station 29, located about 150 feet from the sewer, was entirely void of macroinvertebrates.

Stations 31, 32, 34 and 35 contained only pollution-tolerant species of tubificid worms. Only one species, L. hoffmeisteri, was present at 31 and 34. Stations 32 and 35 contained only L. hoffmeisteri and T. tubifex, and Limnodrilus sp. respectively. Iron constituted 44%, 27% and 30% of the air-dried sediment weight at stations 29, 31 and 32 respectively (no iron analyses were conducted at 34 and 35). Phenol concentrations in the water were high,

ranging from 100 ppb at 29 and 31, to 40 ppb at 35. No wood particles were noted at 29, perhaps because they first start settling out further downstream, but wood particles and fibre were noticed in the sediment at stations 31 to 35, and no doubt contribute to the disruption of the bottom fauna. A distinct naphthalene odour was also noted at all four of these stations.

Pollution was less extensive but still prevalent between stations 36 and 40. While the benthos was limited to pollution-tolerant organisms, a larger variety was found including midge larvae, leeches, lumbriculids, enchytraeids and tubificids. Tubificid worms were restricted to the pollution-tolerant species T. tubifex, L. hoffmeisteri, L. claparedeanus, P. multisetosus and L. profundicola. Iron concentrations in the sediment were lower at these stations, ranging from 3.5 to 12.7% and probably played a less significant role in altering the normal benthos. Phenol concentrations ranged from 30 ppb to 100 ppb, except for station 39 which contained 2 ppb. Wood particles in the sediment were observed at all stations, and a naphthalene odour was detected at 36, 39 and 40. (Infra-red spectroscopic scans from extracts of sediment samples collected in this area in August of 1968 confirmed the presence of naphthalene). Station 39 contained a relatively good variety of organisms, including the lumbriculid S. heringianus, and was probably far enough away from the Canadian shoreline to escape the major zone of pollution.

Section D

Figure 6a illustrates the locations of the 24 stations sampled in this section. Figure 6b illustrates the area of benthic impairment, and figures 6c, 6d, 6e and 6f illustrate

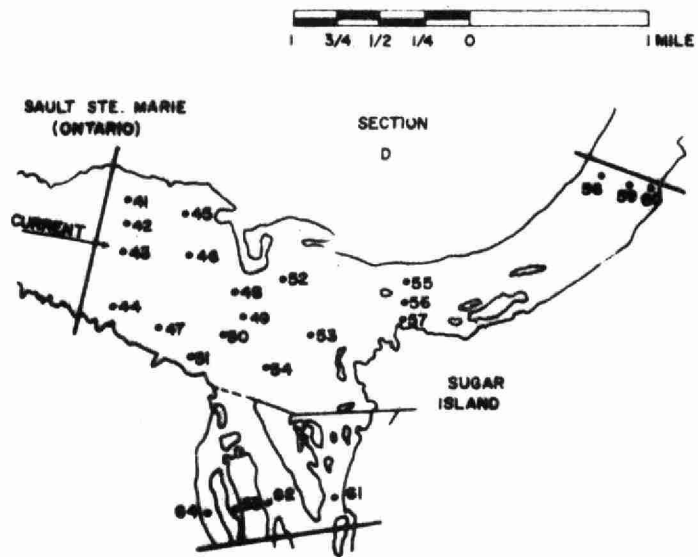


FIG. 6a LOCATION OF THE 24 STATIONS SAMPLED IN SECTION D.

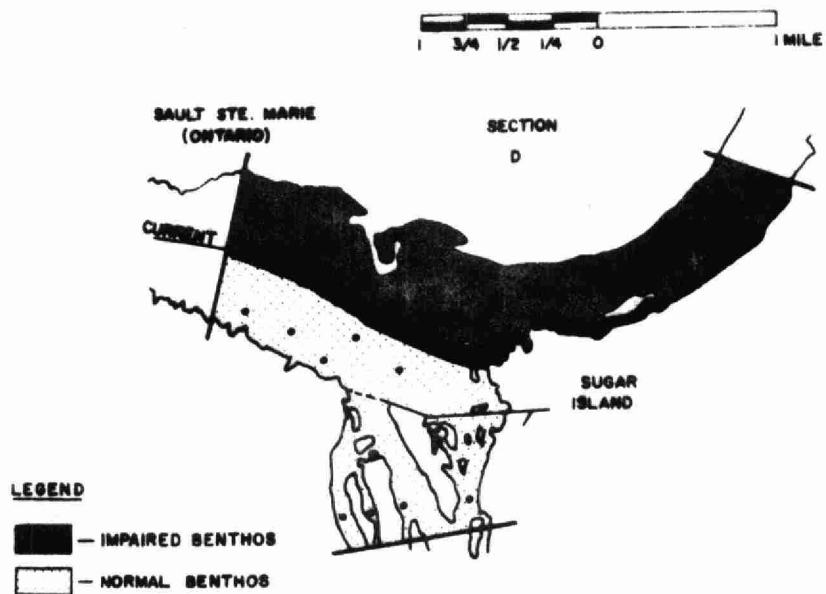
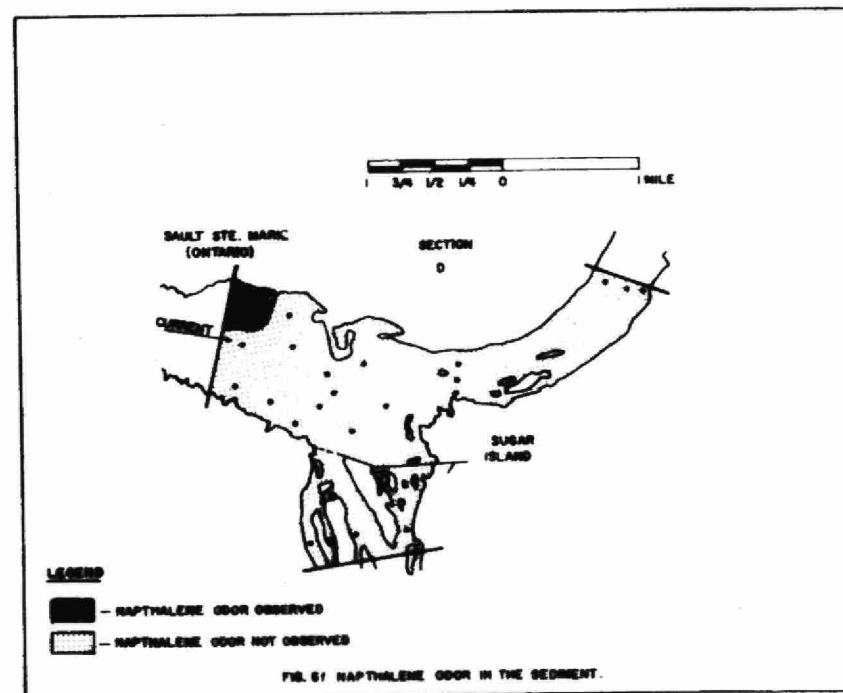
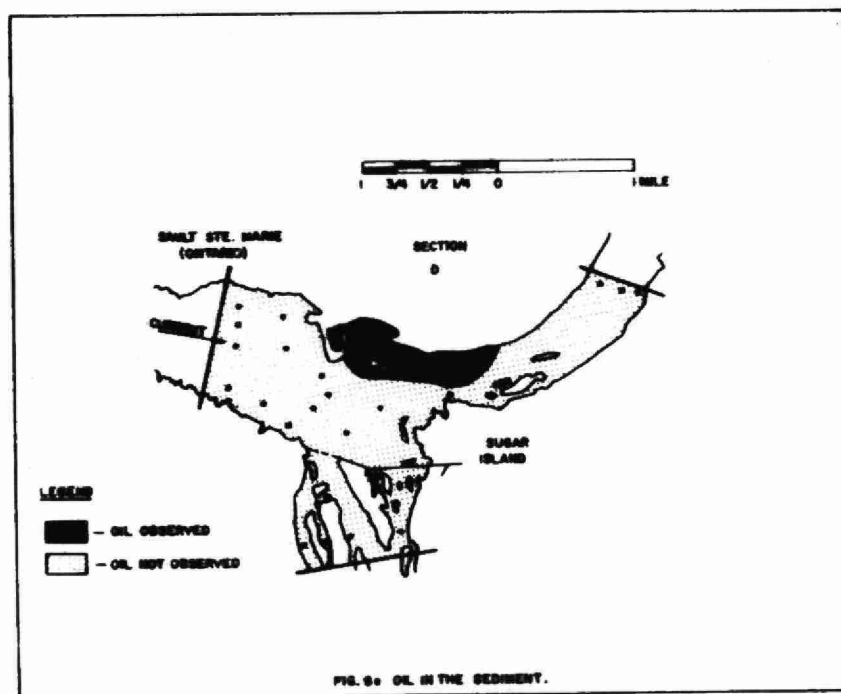
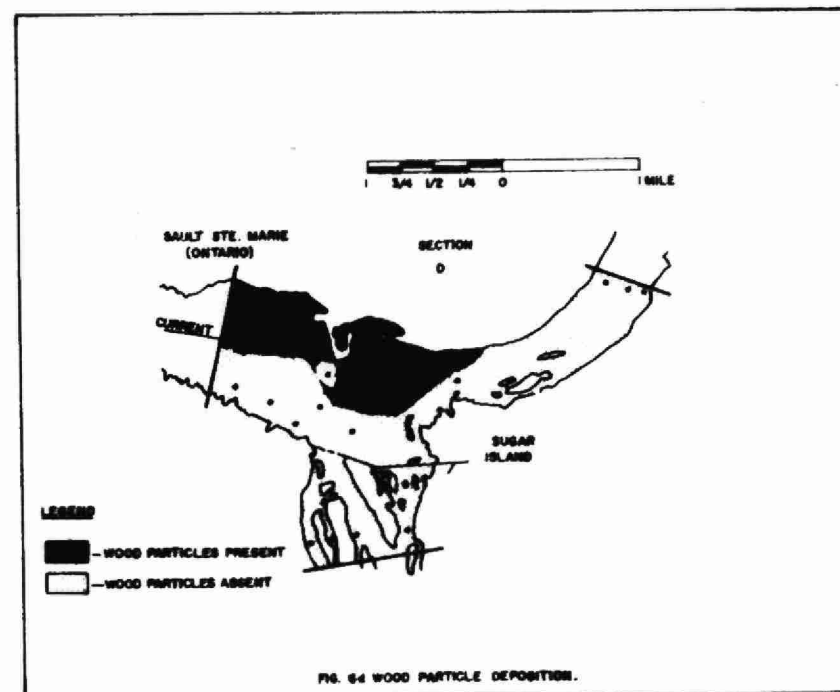
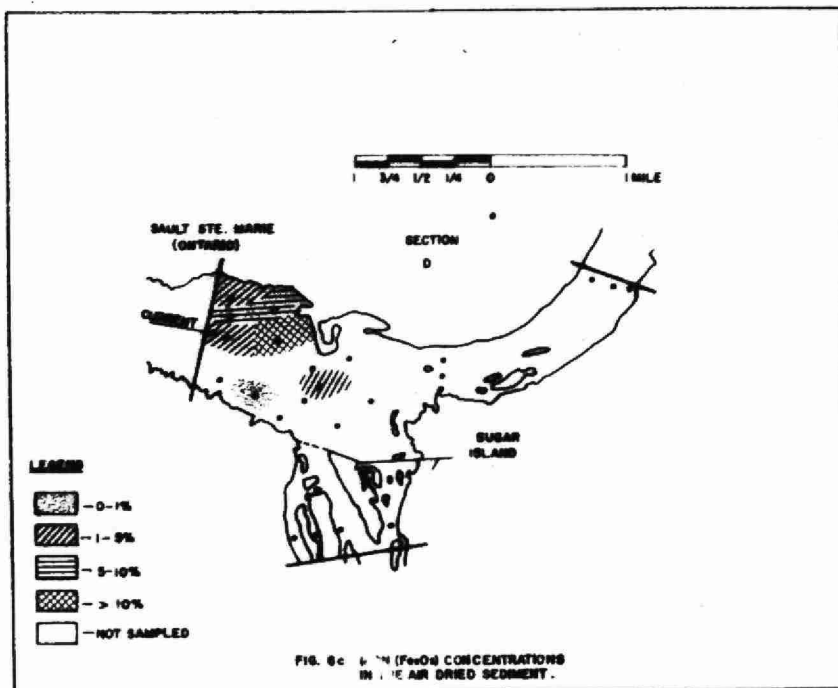


FIG. 6b BENTHIC COMMUNITY STRUCTURE.



the iron concentrations in the sediment and the areas where deposition of wood particles, oil and naphthalene were noted. Benthic populations in this section indicated that the Canadian side of the river can be classed as a recovery zone, while the benthos on the American side reflected good water quality.

At station 41, two pollution-tolerant species of tubificids (L. hoffmeisteri and L. claparedeanus) were the only organisms found. Wood particles were recorded in the sediment, a naphthalene odour was detected, and iron and phenol concentrations in the sediment were 5% and 20,000 ppb respectively. Station 41 was in an area of low flow, and the settling out of wood particles and fibre probably gave rise to a high rate of decomposition and played a major role in disrupting the benthos.

Stations 42, 43, 45 and 46 had a greater diversity of benthic organisms. A wider variety of tubificids were present, including the species A. limnobi and P. curvisetosus, which are not found in heavily polluted water. An amphipod was found at station 42 and an isopod (Asellus) at station 43, along with a good variety of midge larvae. However, no mayflies or caddisflies were found at these stations, and physical impairment of the sediment was still prevalent. Wood particles and fibre were observed at all four stations, iron concentrations reached 10% at station 46, phenol concentrations reached 10% at station 46, phenol concentrations reached 100 ppb in water samples (station 46) and 25,000 ppb in sediment samples (station 42), and a distinct naphthalene odour in the sediment was noted at station 42.

Information from stations 48, 49, 42, 53 and 55 to 60 indicated that recovery was more advanced in this area. Stations 49, 52 and 53 contained a reasonably well-balanced benthos including sludgeworms, midge larvae, snails, clams and isopods. Wood particles and fibre were observed in the sediment at these three stations, but an iron determination for the sediment at station 49 revealed only 1% Fe_2O_3 , and no oil or naphthalene odour was detected.

Stations 55, 56 and 57 contained sludgeworms, midge larvae, leeches, crayfish, snails, clams, isopods and amphipods. No wood particles or naphthalene odour was detected in the sediment, and only a slight amount of oil was observed. The bottom fauna at stations 58, 59 and 60 was similar to that found at stations 55-57. A relatively wide variety of macroinvertebrates was found, including the lumbricid S. heringianus. However, wood fibre was noted in the sediment at station 59, and the absence of mayflies and caddisflies suggests that recovery was not complete even at this distance (about 5 miles) from the trunk sewer.

No impairment of water quality was observed on the American side of the river (stations 44, 47, 50, 51, 54, 61, 62, 63, and 64). A well-balanced fauna with a wide variety of organisms was found in this area, as well as the common occurrence of clean-water organisms. The mayfly genus Hexagenia was found at five of the nine stations, and the genus Ephemera at two stations. Caddisflies, including the genera Tranodes and Caenis, were found at two stations. Sludgeworm and midge larvae populations were represented by a wide

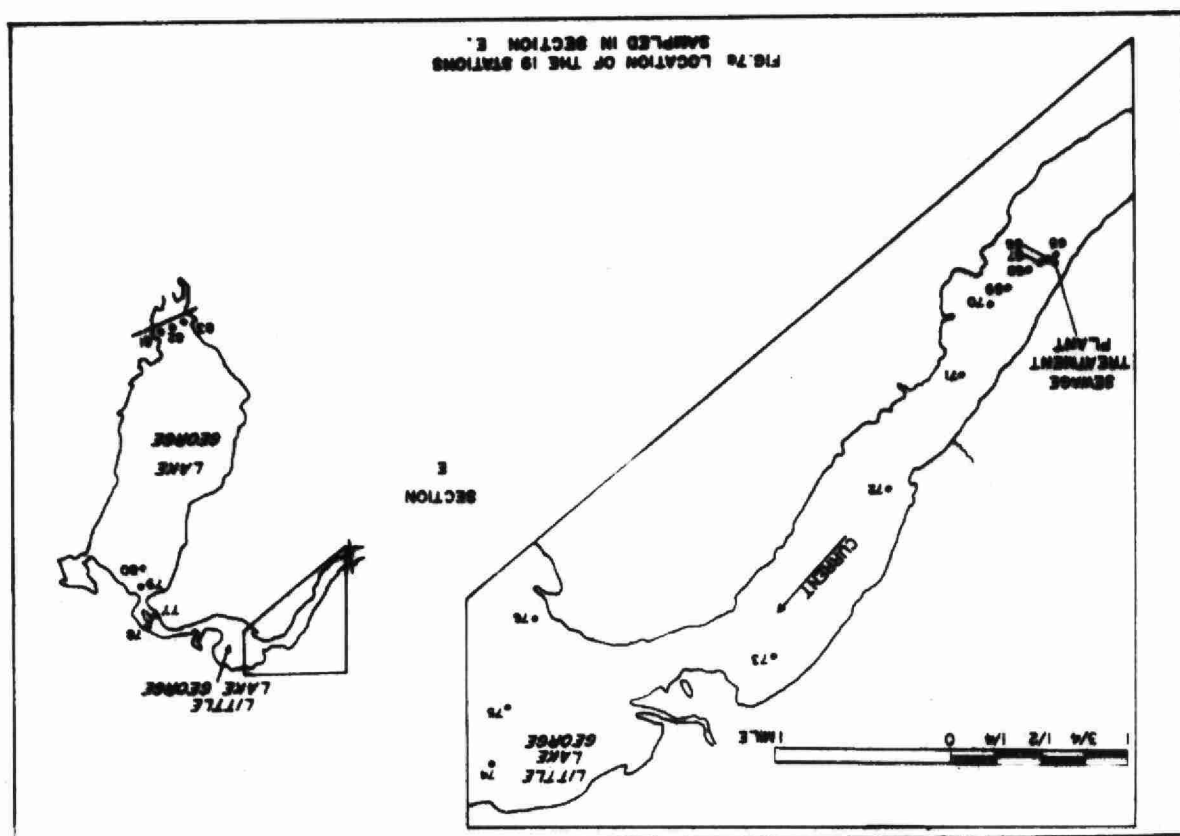
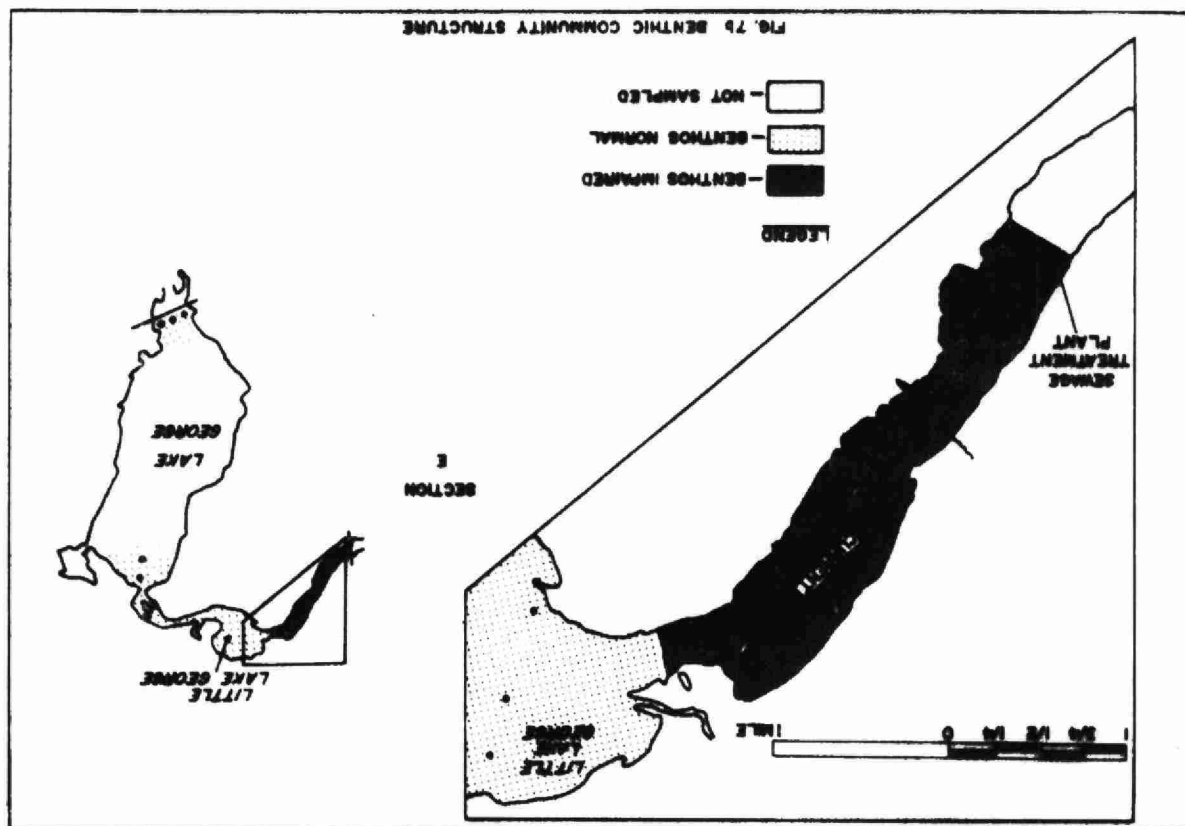
variety of species, including several types which are restricted to clean-water habitats. No wood particles or fibre were observed in the sediment at any of these stations, nor was oil or naphthalene odour. An iron determination at station 47 showed 0.16% Fe_2O_3 in the sediment. It is evident that industrial wastes from the Canadian side do not impair the benthos along the western channel of Sugar Island.

Section E

This section of the river receives the effluent from Sault Ste. Marie's sewage treatment plant. A total of 19 stations were sampled in this area (Fig. 7a). Stations 65 to 73 were selected to study the effect of the wastes from the sewage treatment plant on the river.

A small drogue was placed in the discharge in order to trace the path of flow of wastes from the sewage treatment plant; stations 65 to 70 were selected along this path. The drogue study was conducted on a very calm day (August 13), and it is believed that the flow pattern was traced with reasonable accuracy.

Heavy organic pollution was evident at stations 65 to 69, station 65 being 100 feet from the outfall, and 69 being 1800 feet from the outfall. These stations supported dense tubificid populations, and the benthic community was restricted to pollution-tolerant organisms (Fig. 7b). Station 65 contained only tubificid worms (L. hoffmeisteri and L. udekemianus); the population density was 2000 per M^2 .



A high rate of decomposition in the sediment was indicated, as large amounts of gas were released when the anchor and dredge hit bottom. There was a distinct sewage odour to the sediment, and lab tests on surface water samples showed a BOD_5 of 15 ppm, a phenol concentration of 30 ppb, and a free NH_3 concentration of 4.6 ppm. Station 66 (300 feet from outfall) also contained only tubificid worms (L. angustipenis, L. hoffmeisteri, and T. tubifex), reaching a population density of 8300 per M^2 . A large amount of gas was again emitted at this station as the dredge hit bottom, indicating heavy decomposition.

Organic pollution was still prevalent at stations 67 (600' from outfall), 68 (1000' from outfall, and 69 (1800' from outfall). While tubificid densities were extremely high at these stations (45,000 per M^2 at 67, 63,000 per M^2 at 68), pollution-tolerant genera of clams (Pisidium) and snails (Physa) were found. Gas emerged from the sediment at station 67 when the dredge hit bottom, and tests on water samples showed a BOD_5 reading of 6.3 ppm and a free NH_3 concentration of 0.05 ppm. Station 69 contained only tubificid worms, all of which were pollution-tolerant (L. hoffmeisteri, T. ignotus, P. ferox). The population density, however, was reduced to 800 per M^2 .

Recovery was evident at stations 70 and 71 (2500 feet and 4600 feet from outfall), and the benthos at 72 (8500 feet from outfall) was similar to that found just upstream from the sewage treatment plant outfall. Stations 70 and 71 contained a good variety of organisms including the lumbriculid

S. heringianus, leeches, the snail genus Campeloma, and fingernail clams (Pisidium). At station 72, little or no effect from the sewage treatment plant could be substantiated; tubificids, lumbriculids, leeches, clams and isopods were found, similar to the situation at stations 58 to 60. Similarly, only minor impairment was noticed at station 73, probably from the combined effect of the industrial and sewage treatment plant effluents. Some wood fibre was observed in the sediment at this station, and a high worm population (24,000 per M²) was found. The benthic community, however, supported a variety of organisms, including leeches, clams, snails and isopods.

Wastes from the sewage treatment plant enter the river before there is complete recovery from wastes discharged upstream by the Algoma Steel Corp., (trunk sewer) and the Abitibi Power and Paper Co., and total recovery is therefore further delayed. The normal benthic community between the sewage treatment plant and Little Lake George is altered probably by a combination of these industrial and municipal wastes.

Complete recovery of the benthos was not evident until Little Lake George was reached (approximately 10 miles from the industrial waste effluents). Stations 74 to 83 contained a wide variety of organisms, including clean-water mayflies (Hexagenia, Ephemera, Caenis) and caddisflies (Polycentropus). Similar to the benthos upstream from Sault Ste. Marie, a wide variety of species was found, with low populations of pollution-tolerant tubificids and midge larvae. No chemical tests were

conducted at these stations, but visual observations indicated good water quality. Iron oxide particles, wood particles, oil, and naphthalene odours were not observed in the sediment.

Section F

Figure 8 gives the locations of the six stations sampled along the west channel of Sugar Island. The benthos along this channel indicated a clean-water environment. The fauna were similar to those found upstream from Sault Ste. Marie. Clean-water mayflies and caddisflies were commonly found, the macroinvertebrate communities were well-balanced, and no physical impairment of the water or sediment was noted. The wastes from Sault Ste. Marie, Canada, obviously do not affect the bottom fauna in this area. Although an examination of waste effluents from Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, was not carried out, no impairment was found on the American side of the river, and hence any wastes from the American side of the study area must have, at most, a minor effect on the river.

DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

Water entering the St. Mary's River from Lake Superior is of excellent quality. Biological and chemical measurements and observations at stations upstream from Sault Ste. Marie indicate clean-water conditions.

The major demonstrable impact of pollution entering the St. Mary's River at Sault Ste. Marie is in altering the suitability of the river for supporting game fish populations.

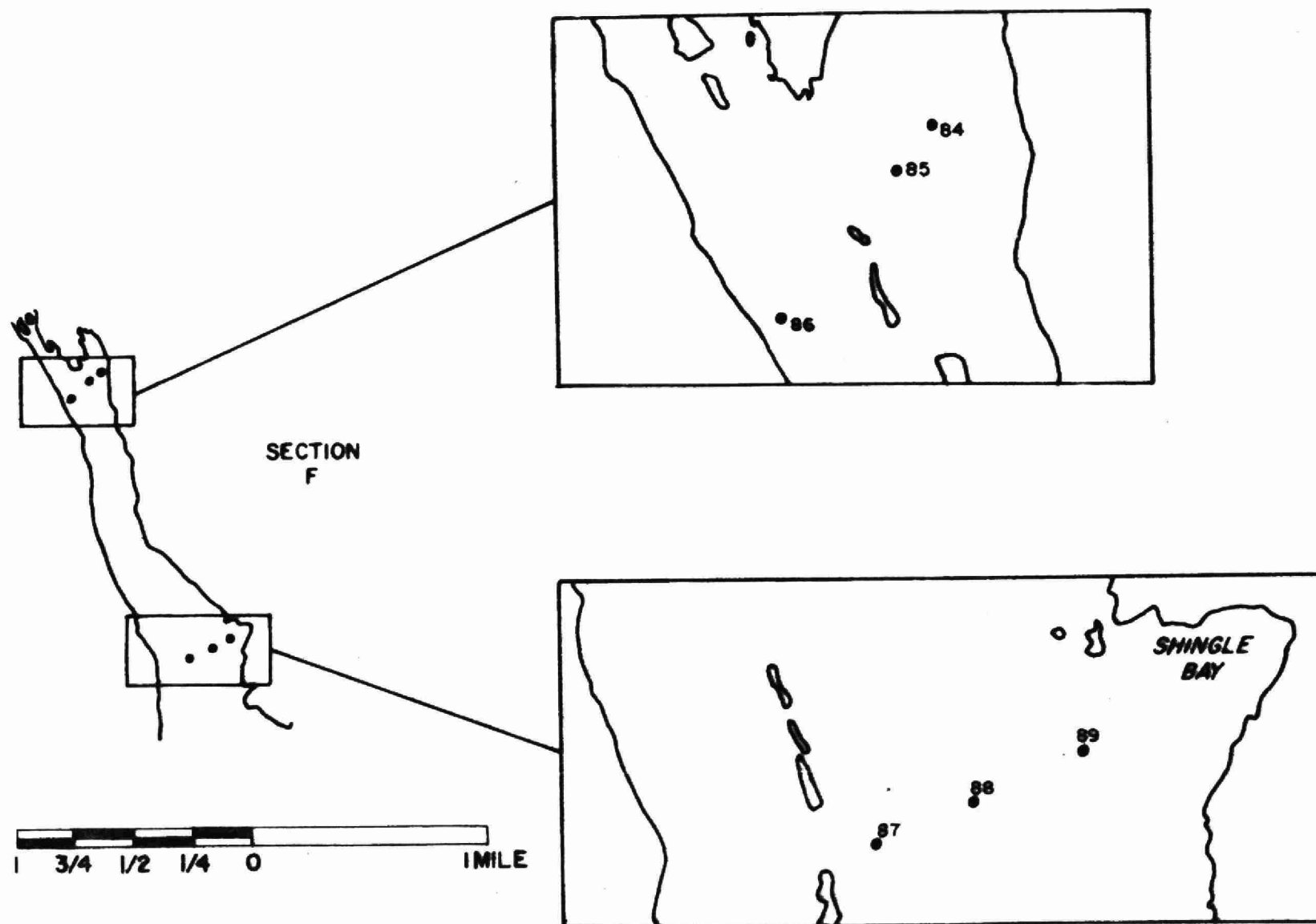


FIG. 8 LOCATION OF THE SIX STATIONS SAMPLED IN SECTION F

This has resulted from the elimination of normal populations of aquatic insects and other invertebrates and their replacement by pollution-tolerant species which have limited value as fish food organisms. Another major effect is a reduction in the aesthetic quality of the river.

Normal bottom faunal communities along Algoma's loading dock and in the bay just west of the dock are disrupted. This impairment is a result of the general water and sediment degradation in that area. Three waste materials were identified in the sediments and were considered responsible for most of the damage to the bottom fauna, including iron oxide particles, wood particles and oil. The benthos towards the head of the dock is disrupted by oil, probably a result mainly of Algoma's discharges to Davignon Creek, as well as by iron oxide particles in the sediment, originating from the Algoma Steel Corporation. The benthos at the end of the dock is severely affected by iron oxide particles, which are discharged at effluent #10 (see Fig. 4a). Bottom faunal associations in the bay are unbalanced as a result of wood particles, iron oxide particles, and oil in the sediment. The wood particles come from previous logging operations in this area, iron oxide particles come from the Algoma Steel plant; most of the oil probably comes from Davignon Creek, although some may come from Bennet Creek. At the time of this survey, there appeared to be very little flow in either of these creeks. However, oil emerged from the sediment in parts of both these creeks when the bottom was disturbed, and a 'flushing' action after a heavy rain presumably would carry a considerable amount of oil into the main river.

The loading dock area and bay are isolated from the main flow of the river, and hence a lack of 'flushing' from river flow is a factor in allowing this area to deteriorate. If the accumulation of iron oxide and wood particles continues, a heavy coating could accumulate on the bottom of the bay. At present, the normal benthos has been disrupted considerably in this area, and major fish-food organisms such as mayflies and caddisflies are absent.

Immediately outside this loading dock and bay area, the effect on the benthos is negligible; it appears that much of the waste material entering via Bennet and Spring Creeks, or via discharges along Algoma's loading dock, circle into the bay and settle out.

No impairment of the bottom fauna was detected in the water flowing through the St. Mary's Falls and the canal operated by the Abitibi Power and Paper Company. Water flowing through the Abitibi Power and Paper plant is discharged into a slip which receives two waste effluents from this company. Because of the difficulty in sampling this area due to the rapid water flow, effects of these waste discharges cannot be accurately stated. However, results from one station sampled between these effluents and the trunk sewer indicated that impairment just downstream from these wastes is minor. The main problem, which affects several miles of the Canadian side of the river, arises further downstream where wood particles and fibre settle out causing physical disruption of the sediment and heavy decomposition. The benthos in many of the calm bay areas along the north shore

between the Abitibi Power and Paper plant and Sugar Island is quite seriously affected by excessive decomposition of these wastes. Aesthetic impairment is also evident in the area around stations 37, 38, 40, 41 and 45 because of the dark brown mats which float up to the surface. These mats are presumably released from the bottom by gases released upon decomposition of the fine wood chips and fibre. Wood chips were noted in the sediment on the Canadian side of the river as far downstream as Little Lake George (approximately 10 miles downstream from the Abitibi Power and Paper plant), although they were found infrequently beyond stations 55-57 (approximately 3-3/4 miles down from the Abitibi Power and Paper plant).

The major source of pollution on the river is the trunk sewer which carries wastes from the Algoma Steel plant; the flow of this sewer averages about 75 mgd. The high concentration of iron particles in this sewer disrupts the benthos at least to a distance of two and one-half miles downstream. No macroinvertebrates were found at one station located about 150 feet from the sewer where iron constituted 44% of the sediment weight. Oil and naphthalene are two other waste products from the trunk sewer which probably play a significant role in disrupting the benthos. A distinct naphthalene odour was noticed in the sediment samples as far downstream as two miles from the effluent, and high phenol concentrations in both the water and sediment were found throughout the same area.

While such wastes as wood particles and fibres, iron oxide particles, oils and naphthalene are easily recognizable as pollutants, it is the combined effect of all the wastes which disrupts the benthos. For this reason, it is difficult to specifically pinpoint the major pollutants further downstream from Sault Ste. Marie. However, it is clear that the benthos is affected by these combined industrial wastes even as far downstream as the sewage treatment plant (approximately 5 miles downstream from the trunk sewer), although recovery is fairly advanced at this point.

The effluent from the sewage treatment plant is seriously disrupting the benthos up to a distance of 1800 feet downstream from the outfall. Recovery was evident at stations located 2500 feet and 4600 feet from the effluent, and at 8500 feet the benthos was similar to that found just above the outfall. Complete recovery of the benthos is not evident until Little Lake George is reached, at which point benthic community structure was similar to that found upstream from Sault Ste. Marie. It is believed that without the entrance of the sewage treatment plant effluent, the benthos would recover from the Algoma Steel Company's and the Abitibi Power and Paper Company's wastes just beyond the location of the sewage plant. Similarly, recovery from the sewage treatment plant wastes would probably be reached earlier if the water assimilating these wastes was not impaired by industrial wastes. The combined industrial and municipal wastes, do not permit complete recovery until Little Lake George is reached.

Bottom faunal communities along the west channel of Sugar Island indicated a clean-water environment. It can therefore be concluded that wastes from the Canadian industries do not disrupt the invertebrate populations on the American side of the river.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) Improved waste control measures should be implemented by the Algoma Steel Corporation Ltd. Special attention should be given to the removal of iron, oil, phenol, ammonia, cyanide, and naphthalene from their waste discharges.
- b) Adequate waste control facilities should be developed by the Abitibi Power and Paper Company. Primary consideration should be given to the removal of wood particles and fibre.
- c) Improvements to the municipal collector system and enlarged waste treatment facilities should be undertaken by the municipality.
- d) The origin of oil in the sediment of Bennet Creek and Davignon Creek should be investigated, as well as the source of oil found in the sediment of the bay just upstream from the Algoma Steel Corporation's loading dock.

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[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

NEMATODES

FLATWORMS

LEECHES

Erpobdella
punctata
Dina
lateralis
Helobdella
stagnalis
Mooreobdella
microstoma
(unidentified)

10

10

SNAILS

Amnicola
binneyana
(unidentified)

29

264

Campeloma

Goniobasis
livescens
(unidentified)

29

Gyraulus

10

Helisoma

Lymnaea

Physa

Pyrgulopsis

Valvata
sincera
tricarinata

10

86

CLAMS

Pisidium
Sphaerium

39

104

114

CRAYFISH

Orconectes
virilus
propinquus
(immature)

AMPHIPODS

Pontoporeia
affinis
Hyalrella
azteca

ISOPODS

Asellus
Lirceus

10

MIDGES

10

30

217

236

293

ALDERFLIES

CADDISFLIES

Hydropsyche 19

Limnephilus

Mystacides

Oecetis

Dolophilus 10

Polycentropus

Phryganea

Phylocentropus

Rhyacopila 10

Triaenodes

MAYFLIES

Hexagenia 19

Ephemera

Caenis

49

STONEFLIES

BLACKFLIES

	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46
TUBIFICIDS											
<u>Limnodrilus</u>											
<u>angustipenis</u>											
<u>cervix</u>											
<u>claparedianus</u>											
			59	39	581	39	236				
		512	10	39	502	394	1940	502	148	1694	888
				39	54		69	10	10		
		2600									
<u>udekemianus</u>											
(unidentified)	10	5397	19	276	581	237	994	1044	49	9421	3398
<u>Tubifex</u>											
<u>ignotus</u>											
<u>kessleri</u>											
<u>templetoni</u>											
<u>tubifex</u>											
		7959	10		88						236
(unidentified)		6186	10	138	236		5181	138		30298	798
<u>Pelosclex</u>											
<u>ferox</u>											
							138	276			98
<u>freyi</u>											
									10		
<u>multisetosus</u>											
			10								
<u>superiorensis</u>											
<u>variegatus</u>											
(unidentified)											
<u>Aulodrilus</u>											
<u>americanus</u>											
<u>limnobiis</u>											
										709	
<u>pluriseta</u>											
<u>piqueti</u>											
<u>Potamothrix</u>											
<u>moldaviensis</u>											
<u>vejdovskyi</u>											
<u>Psammoryctides</u>											
<u>curvisetosus</u>											
(unidentified)										157	
LUMBRICULIDS											
<u>Stylodrilus</u>	19			39							
<u>heringianus</u>											
(unidentified)				171				19		157	
ENCHYTRAEIDS											
				39	39						
NAIDIDS											
<u>Arcteonais</u>											
<u>lomondi</u>											
<u>Nais</u>											
<u>variabilis</u>											
<u>Ophidonais</u>											
<u>serpentina</u>											
<u>Uncinaiis</u>											
<u>urcinata</u>											

[illegible]

CADDISFLIES

Hydropsyche

Limnephilus

Mystacides

Oecetis

Dolophilus

Polycentropus

Phryganea

Phylocentropus

Rhyacopila

Trianenodes

MAYFLIES

Hexagenia

Ephemera

Caenis

STONEFLIES

BLACKFLIES

[illegible]

NEMATODES

FLATWORMS

LEECHES

Erpobdella
punctata

Dina

lateralis 19

Helobdella

stagnalis

Mooreobdella

microstoma

(unidentified) 171 39 10

SNAILS

Amnicola

binneyana

(unidentified) 49 10 285 108

Campeloma

Goniobasis

livescens

(unidentified) 10 29 158 10

Gyraulus

19 39

Helisoma

10

Lymnaea

10 49

Physa

10 10

Pyrquulopsis

10

Valvata

sincera

tricarinata 59 39 10 39 443 10 39

CLAMS

Pisidium

29 39 29 19 10 39 69 207

Sphaerium

29 10

CRAYFISH

Orconectes

virilus

propinquus

(immature) 10

AMPHIPODS

Pontoporeia

affinis

Hyaella

azteca

39

ISOPODS

Asellus

79 10 10 10

Lirceus

MIDGES

690 39 99 10 39 49 10 39

ALDERFLIES

CADDISFLIES

Hydropsyche

Limnephilus

Mystacides

Oecetis

Dolophilus

Polycentropus

Phryganea

Phylocentropus

Rhyacopila

Trianenodes

10

MAYFLIES

Hexagenia

79

29

Ephemera

Caenis

STONEFLIES

BLACKFLIES

10

[illegible]

[illegible]

- CADDISFLIES
 - Hydropsyche
 - Limnephilus
 - Mystacides
 - Oecetis
 - Dolophilus
 - Polycentropus
 - Phryganea
 - Phylocentropus
 - Rhyacopila
 - Trianenodes
- MAYFLIES
 - Hexagenia
 - Ephemera
 - Caenis
- STONEFLIES
- BLACKFLIES

10

10

10

89

10

10

10

[illegible]

NEMATODES

FLATWORMS

LEECHES

Erpobdella

punctata

Dina

lateralis

Helobdella

stagnalis

Mooreobdella

microstoma

(unidentified)

19

39 10 158 89

SNAILS

Amnicola

binneyana

(unidentified)

19

Campeloma

20

39 20

Goniobasis

livescens

(unidentified)

Gyraulus

Helisoma

10

Lymnaea

10

10

Physa

304

50

29

10 10

Pyrgulopsis

Valvata

sincera

tricarinata

10 147

CLAMS

Pisidium

158

20

138

315

10

364 384

Sphaerium

10

CRAYFISH

Orconectes

virilus

propinquus

(immature)

AMPHIPODS

Pontoporeia

affinis

Hyaella

azteca

ISOPODS

Asellus

20

10

39

483 29

Lirceus

MIDGES

10

276

10

20

69 99

ALDERFLIES

10

CADDISFLIES

Hydropsyche

Limnephilus

Mystacides

Oecetis

Dolophilus

Polycentropus

Phryganea

Phylocentropus

Rhyacopila

Trianenodes

MAYFLIES

Hexagenia

217

Ephemera

Caenis

10

STONEFLIES

10

BLACKFLIES

TUBIFICIDS

Limnodrilus

angustipenis

cervix

claparedianus

hoffmeisteri

profundicola

udekemianus

(unidentified)

492

39

19

482

10

19

936

20

1142

39

59

Tubifex

ignotus

kessleri

templetoni

tubifex

(unidentified)

Peloscolex

ferox

freyi

multisetosus

superiorensis

variegatus

(unidentified)

187

10

19

10

39

20

10

Aulodrilus

americanus

limnobius

pluriseta

piguetti

10

19

10

89

49

19

Potamothenix

moldaviensis

vejdovskyi

Psammoryctides

curvisetosus

(unidentified)

10

LUMBRICULIDS

Stylodrilus

heringianus

(unidentified)

69

20

69

207

10

138

49

ENCHYTRAEIDS

NAIDIDS

Arcteonais

lomondi

Nais

variabilis

Ophidonais

serpentina

Uncinaiis

urcinata

	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89
NEMATODES											
FLATWORMS		59	10								
LEECHES											
<u>Erpobdella</u>											
<u>punctata</u>											
<u>Dina</u>											
<u>lateralis</u>											
<u>Helobdella</u>											
<u>stagnalis</u>											
<u>Mooreobdella</u>	197	10				39		20		20	
<u>microstoma</u>											
(unidentified)											
SNAILS											
<u>Amnicola</u>											
<u>binneyana</u>											
(unidentified)											
<u>Campeloma</u>											
<u>Goniobasis</u>											
<u>livescens</u>											
(unidentified)											
<u>Gyraulus</u>											
<u>Helisoma</u>											
<u>Lymnaea</u>											
<u>Physa</u>											
<u>Pyrgulopsis</u>											
<u>Valvata</u>											
<u>sincera</u>											
<u>tricarinata</u>											
CLAMS											
<u>Pisidium</u>											
<u>Sphaerium</u>											
CRAYFISH											
<u>Orconectes</u>											
<u>virilus</u>											
<u>propinquus</u>											
(immature)											
AMPHIPODS											
<u>Pontoporeia</u>											
<u>affinis</u>											
<u>Hyaella</u>											
<u>azteca</u>											
ISOPODS											
<u>Asellus</u>		916				49	79			89	
<u>Lirceus</u>			108							19	
MIDGES	79	10	39		118	89	177	122	99	89	49
ALDERFLIES					39						

CADDISFLIES

Hydropsyche

Limnephilus

Mystacides

Oecetis

Dolophilus

Polycentropus 10

Phryganea

Phylocentropus

Rhyacopila 10

Trianenodes

MAYFLIES

Hexagenia 211 315 1202 276 10 20 39

Ephemera 20 10 59 108 20 541

Caenis 10

STONEFLIES

BLACKFLIES

*Appendix II. Results of the chemical analyses of samples collected on the St. Mary's River - July and August, 1967.

<u>Bottom Water</u>	<u>Stations</u>							
	5	6	9	10	12	14	16	17
BOD ₅			1.4				0.4	0.5
Total solids	45	44	120	90	36	52	102	66
Susp. solids	5	1	7	5	3	4	10	2
Diss. solids	40	43	113	85	33	48	92	64
Free NH ₃	0.08	0.08	0.03	0.08	0.06	0.03	0.23	0.10
Total kjeldahl	0.20	0.13	0.33	0.20	0.13	0.33	0.39	0.26
Nitrite	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Nitrate	0.18	0.17	0.22	0.22	0.17	0.22	0.05	0.06
Total phos. (as PO ₄)	0.13	0.01	0.01	0.04	0.01	0.01	0.045	0.120
Iron (as Fe)	0.05	0.19	0.22	0.08	0.05	0.11	0.34	0.75
Phenols (ppb)	0	2	2	0	0	0	2	0
Cyanide (as HCN)	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0	-
Sulphate	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.0	-
<u>Sediment</u>								
Ether sol. oils (%)	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.11	0.01
Iron (Fe ₂ O ₃) (%)	-	-	-	-	-	-	7.57	0.89
Phenols (ppb)	-	-	-	-	-	-	2500	2500

*All results in parts per million unless otherwise stated.

Appendix II. continued

	Stations							
Bottom Water	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
BOD ₅	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
Total solids	56	88	64	70	64	62	74	74
Susp. solids	2	5	1	1	3	2	1	4
Diss. solids	54	83	63	69	61	60	73	70
Free NH ₃	0.02	0.23	0.02	0.02	0.06	0.10	0.08	0.16
Total kjeldahl	0.39	0.33	1.10	0.39	0.20	0.26	0.39	0.33
Nitrite	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Nitrate	0.05	0.05	0.08	0.06	0.05	0.16	0.06	0.17
Total Phos. (as PO ₄)	.015	.200	.145	.015	0.21	0.35	.020	.015
Iron (as Fe)	0.34	0.80	0.11	0.08	0.55	0.09	0.63	0.45
Phenols (ppb)	0.00	0.00	0.00	2	0.00	0.00	8	0.00
Cyanide (as HCN)	-	-	-	-	0.00	0.00	-	-
Sulphate				4.0	-	0.00	-	-

Sediment

Ether sol. oils	1.16	0.53	0.16	0.24	0.27	0.04	0.17	0.10
Iron (Fe ₂ O ₃) (%)	6.97	5.97	5.1	6.5	25.4	0.90	10.6	1.74
Phenols (ppb)	4000	1500	2000	2500	1200	1200	1500	3000

Appendix II. continued

	Stations							
<u>Bottom Water</u>	26	28	29	30	31	32	33	34
BOD ₅	0.4	-	-	-	3.1	-	1.3	2.7
Total solids	68	40	324	-	54	-	32	52
Susp. solids	3	8	25		7	-	4	9
Diss. solids	65	32	299	-	47	-	28	43
Free NH ₃	0.02	0.13	0.33	-	0.39	-	0.12	0.43
Total kjeldahl	0.39	0.46	0.84	-	1.43	-	0.40	0.98
Nitrite	0.00	.006	.007	-	.007	-	.005	.008
Nitrate	0.00	0.10	0.15	-	0.04	-	0.15	0.08
Total Phos. (as PO ₄)	.025	0.08	0.06	-	0.26	-	0.04	0.05
Iron (as Fe)	0.15	0.23	0.42	-	0.50	-	0.14	0.45
Phenols (ppb)	0.00	4	1100	-	100	-	2	100
Cyanide (as HCN)	0.00	0.00	0.09	-	-	-	-	0.12
Sulphate	2.0	0.00	2.0	-	-	-	-	0.00
<u>Sediment</u>								
Ether sol. oils	-	-	0.51	0.11	2.59	0.82	0.04	-
Iron (Fe ₂ O ₃) (%)	-	-	44.2	3.17	27.4	29.9	-	-
Phenols (ppb)	-	-	1600	1200	12000	2000	1200	-

Appendix II. continued

	Stations						
<u>Bottom Water</u>	35	36	37	38	39	40	41
BOD ₅	1.9	1.7	1.8	1.3	0.6	1.3	-
Total solids	54	36	32	34	46	26	-
Susp. solids	8	6	6	6	4	5	-
Diss. solids	45	30	23	-	42	21	-
Free NH ₃	0.39	0.30	-	-	-	-	-
Total kjeldahl	0.46	0.46	-	-	-	-	-
Nitrite	.005	.005	-	-	-	-	-
Nitrate	0.10	0.10	-	-	-	-	-
Total Phos. (as PO ₄)	0.03	0.03	0.06	0.04	0.05	0.05	-
Iron (as Fe)	0.25	0.18	0.40	0.33	0.10	0.45	-
Phenols (ppb)	40	30	100	100	2	100	-
Cyanide (as HCN)	0.02	0.02	-	-	-	-	-
Sulphate	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
 <u>Sediment</u>							
Ether sol. oils	-	-	0.15	0.87	0.18	0.39	0.14
Iron (Fe ₂ O ₃) (%)	-	-	12.7	5.5	4.9	3.5	5.9
Phenols (ppb)	-	-	1200	15000	1200	20000	20000

Appendix II. continued

	Stations					
<u>Bottom Water</u>	42	43	45	46	47	49
BOD ₅	-	-	-	2.9	1.4	0.8
Total solids	20	-	-	26	40	46
Susp. solids	-	-	-	6	5	4
Diss. solids	-	-	-	20	35	42
Free NH ₃	-	-	-	0.23	0.13	0.16
Total kjeldahl	-	-	-	0.46	0.20	0.52
Nitrite	-	-	-	.006	.004	.005
Nitrate	-	-	-	0.10	0.15	0.10
Total Phos. (as PO ₄)	-	-	-	0.04	0.04	0.03
Iron (as Fe)	-	-	-	0.43	0.13	0.25
Phenols (ppb)	-	-	-	100	4	4
Cyanide (as HCN)	-	-	-	0.06	-	-
Sulphate	-	-	-	-	-	-
<u>Sediment</u>						
Ether sol. oils	0.63	0.37	0.75	1.17	0.16	0.02
Iron (Fe ₂ O ₃) (%)	2.2	-	7.4	10.4	0.01	1.1
Phenols (ppb)	25000	12000	12000	12000	1200	800

Appendix II. continued

<u>Bottom Water</u>	Stations		
	65	68	69
BOD ₅	15	6.3	1.2
Total solids	162	60	-
Susp. solids	20	7	10
Diss. solids	142	53	-
Free NH ₃	4.6	0.05	0.10
Total kjeldahl	-	3.10	0.58
Nitrite	.015	0.13	.006
Nitrate	0.10	0.39	0.30
Total Phos. (as PO ₄)	0.15	1.20	0.12
Iron (as Fe)	1.02	0.48	0.36
Phenols (ppb)	30	4	4
Cyanide (as HCN)	-	-	-
Sulphate	-	-	-
 <u>Sediment</u>			
Ether sol. oils	-	-	-
Iron (Fe ₂ O ₃) (%)	-	-	-
Phenols (ppb)	-	-	-